

## **COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

DATE: March 3, 2010

CALLED TO ORDER: 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNED: 6:11 p.m.

### **ATTENDANCE**

#### **ATTENDING MEMBERS**

Lincoln Plowman, Chair  
Paul Bateman  
Susie Day  
Maggie Lewis  
Marilyn Pfisterer

#### **ABSENT**

Doris Minton-McNeill  
Christine Scales

### **AGENDA**

Update on Noble of Indiana's Strategic Initiatives – Clint Bolser, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Presentation on Noble of Indiana's Supportive Employment Services – Deb Okotie, Director

## **COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

The Community Affairs Committee of the City-County Council met on Wednesday, March 3, 2010. Chair Lincoln Plowman called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with the following members present: Paul Bateman, Susie Day, Maggie Lewis, and Marilyn Pfisterer. Absent were Doris Minton-McNeill and Christine Scales.

### **Update on Noble of Indiana's Strategic Initiatives** – Clint Bolser, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Mr. Bolser stated that Noble is in their mid-fiscal year, which for them is July to June. He said that this is an opportunity for him to talk about some of the strategic initiatives Noble has been working on for about a year. He distributed a handout detailing the purpose of Noble (attached as Exhibit A). He explained the following about Noble:

#### **Implement New Services**

- Residential
  - Hired Jeanine Coleman as Director of Community Living. The service launched on January 11, 2010, and the goal is to serve 15 people by June 30, 2010.
- Behavioral Services
  - Noble is working with the State to become a Behavioral Service Provider.

Councillor Bateman asked if the case management plans for behavioral service that Noble puts together is providing another contracted service. Mr. Bolser answered in the negative, stating that Noble will hire a behavioral specialist that has credentials for that particular service.

Councillor Day asked if the residential services are on-site. Mr. Bolser answered in the negative, stating that these are homes and/or apartments in the community. He said that Noble will help those individuals lease those apartments or homes.

Councillor Bateman asked if Noble provides social services to the homeowner or the individual. Mr. Bolser stated that they would provide services to the individual based on their level of independence.

Mr. Bolser continued with his presentation:

#### **Expand Existing Services**

- Autism Services
  - Noble serves over 300 children and adults diagnosed with Autism
  - Noble has hired Molly Cross as Autism Coordinator
- Community Employment
  - Fiscal Year 2009, Noble supported 50 individuals in obtaining employment
  - Noble is on track to find 60 jobs in Fiscal Year 2010
  - Average hourly wage of supported individuals is \$7.98
  - Workers average five years on the job

- Wal-Mart Foundation Grant pending

Mr. Bolser stated that the National Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC) of Indiana has received \$3 million from Wal-Mart to help enhance transition services for school-age children with disabilities. He said that Wal-Mart is subcontracting with local chapters like Noble to help enhance services across the country.

Councillor Pfisterer asked if Mr. Bolser could explain the definition of ARC and how it pertains to Noble. Mr. Bolser stated that ARC is the Association for Retarded Citizens of Indiana, an advocacy organization that helps families and individuals with developmental disabilities make sure that their rights and needs are championed.

Mr. Bolser stated that Noble is working on promoting their direct service professionals to promote career paths to go after their certification. He said that Noble does attract high retention rates. During the first half of fiscal year 2010, they have an 88% retention rate and their overall goal is 72% retention rate.

Presentation on Noble of Indiana's Supportive Employment Services – Deb Okotie, Director

Ms. Okotie stated that Noble has been working since 1986 to create a pathway to employment for persons with disabilities. She said that there are over 100,000 area businesses with hundreds of disabled individuals looking for jobs. Ms. Okotie stated that 80% of businesses have never hired someone with a disability. Currently, there are 77% of people with disabilities who are unemployed or underemployed. Ms. Okotie stated that Supportive Employment Service is a program where Noble works with an employer to help find out how they can diversify their workforce and create an opportunity for people with disabilities. She said that Noble also brings employers qualified candidates for positions they already have.

Ms. Okotie stated that businesses can help those individuals with job carving. She said that with job carving, businesses look at their existing job duties to re-align some of those tasks so that they are making their current employees more effective and productive, while at the same time creating a position that a person with developmental disabilities can do.

Councillor Pfisterer asked if the tax incentives apply to the job carving as well as other things. Ms. Okotie answered in the affirmative. Councillor Pfisterer asked if there are tax breaks that accrue for the businesses for participating in job carving. Ms. Okotie answered in the affirmative, stating that the number one reason employers hire individuals with disabilities is for the tax incentive.

Councillor Lewis asked what the difference is between supportive employment services and the program she visited at Pike High School. Mr. Bolser stated that the program at Pike High School is a link to the supportive employment program. He said that the difference with the transition program is that Noble is helping students who are getting ready to graduate transition into work and preparing them to go through the supportive employment program. Councillor Lewis asked if the school receives those tax incentives. Ms. Okotie answered in the negative, stating that those are unpaid internships.

Ms. Okotie stated that the game plan for the supportive service is to educate businesses, network, promote job carving and encourage flexibility. Ms. Okotie stated that people in Noble's employment service earn over \$1.8 million each year and contribute back to the community by purchasing goods and services. Ms. Okotie stated that hiring people with disabilities makes good business sense.

Mr. Bolser stated that this presentation focused on employment, because they know that this economy is in a tough time, and Noble has to advocate for the people they serve. He said that Noble is a true partner with the community, council members, and corporate job development, not only advocating for the people they serve but for all persons with disabilities and the great asset they bring to the business community. He said that it takes all of these partners to communicate that.

With no further business pending, and upon motion duly made, the Community Affairs Committee of the City County Council was adjourned at 6:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lincoln Plowman, Chair  
Community Affairs Committee

LP/law